

FIONA STAPLES BRIAN K. VAUGHAN

Sacra™

CHAPTER
TWENTY
FIVE



HotComic.net

CHAPTER
TWENTY
FIVE

Saga

ART BY
FIONA STAPLES

WRITTEN BY
BRIAN K. VAUGHAN

LETTERS + DESIGN BY
FONOGRAFIKS

COORDINATED BY
ERIC STEPHENSON



IMAGE COMICS, INC.

Robert Kirkman
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
Erik Larsen
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
Todd McFarlane
PRESIDENT
Marc Silvestri
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Jim Valentino
VICE-PRESIDENT

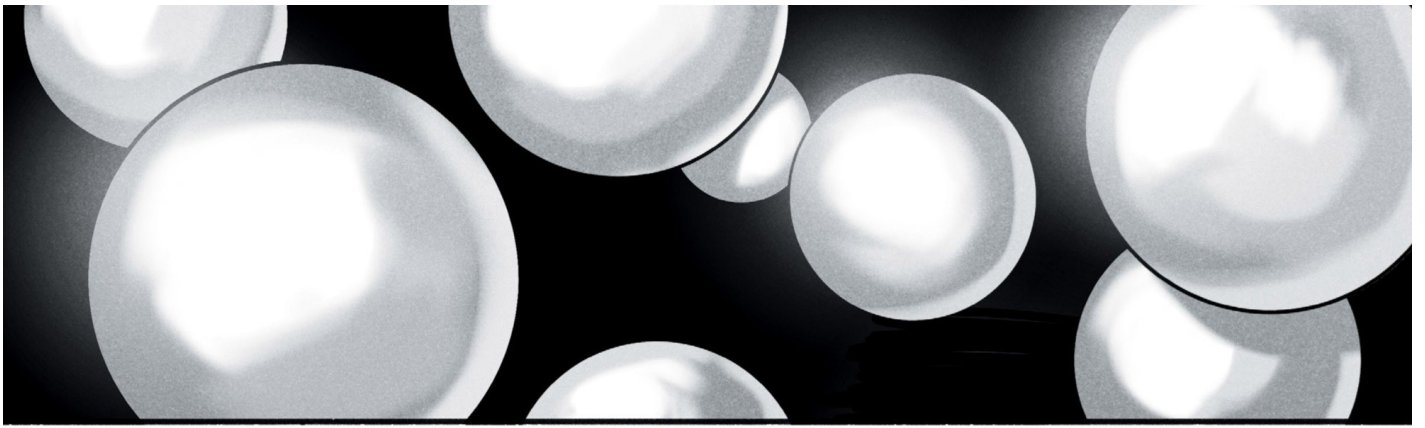
Eric Stephenson
PUBLISHER
Ron Richards
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
Jennifer de Guzman
DIRECTOR OF TRADE BOOK SALES
Kat Salazar
DIRECTOR OF PR & MARKETING
Corey Murphy
DIRECTOR OF RETAIL SALES
Jeremy Sullivan
DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL SALES
Emilio Bautista
SALES ASSISTANT
Branwyn Bigglestone
SENIOR ACCOUNTS MANAGER
Emily Miller
ACCOUNTS MANAGER
Jessica Ambriz
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Tyler Shainline
EVENTS COORDINATOR
David Brothers
CONTENT MANAGER
Jonathan Chan
PRODUCTION MANAGER
Drew Gill
ART DIRECTOR
Meredith Wallace
PRINT MANAGER
Addison Duke
PRODUCTION ARTIST
Vincent Kukua
PRODUCTION ARTIST
Tricia Ramos
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

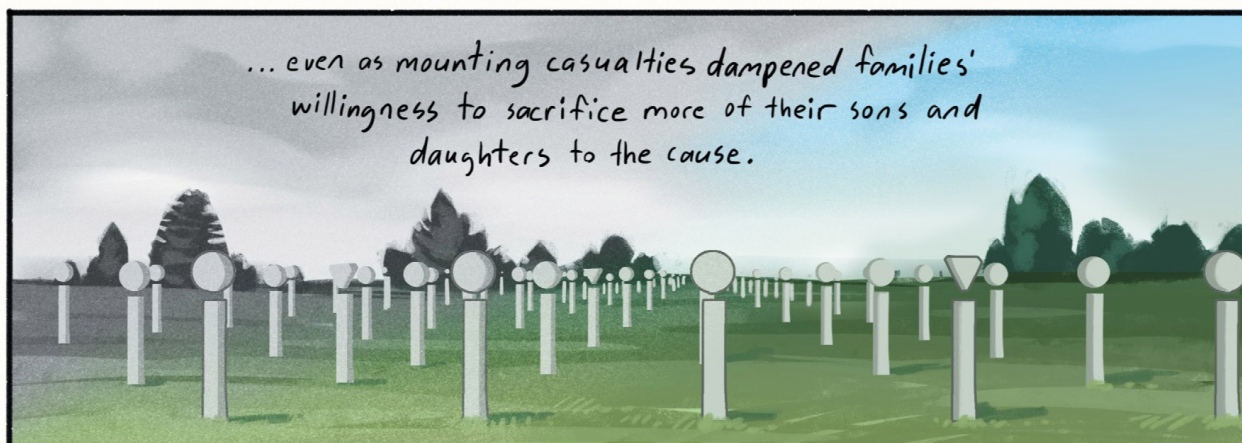
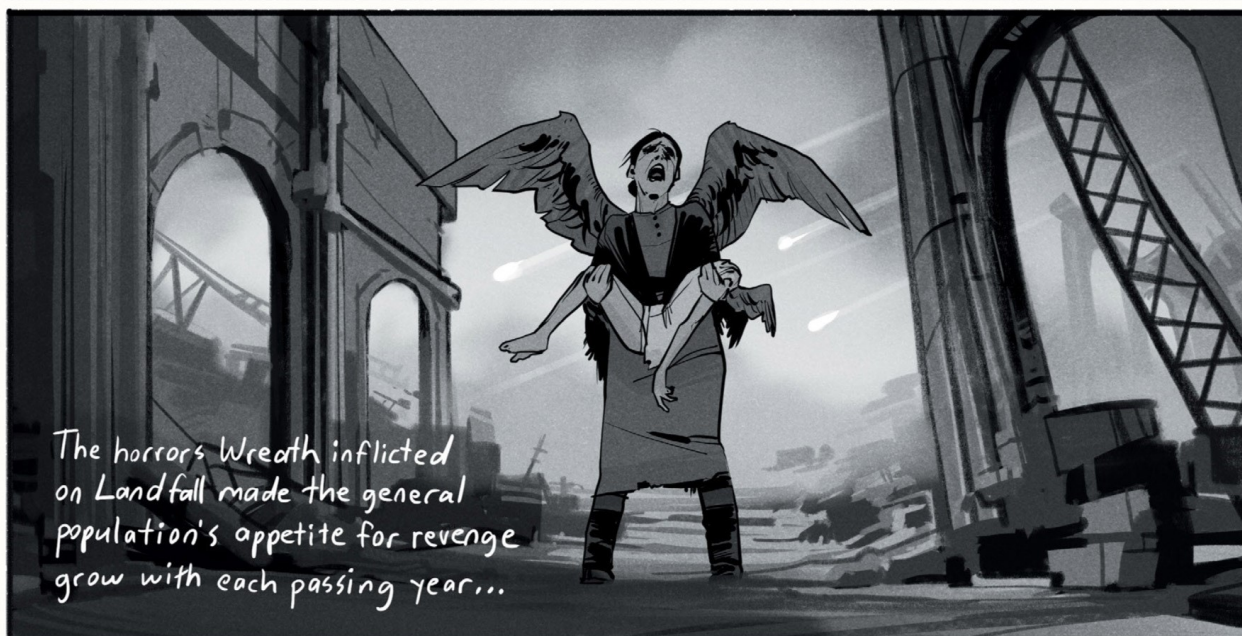
www.imagecomics.com

SAGA #25, February 2015. Published by Image Comics, Inc. Office of publication: 2001 Center Street, Sixth Floor, Berkeley, CA 94704. Copyright © Brian K. Vaughan & Fiona Staples. All rights reserved. SAGA, its logos, and all character likenesses herein are trademarks of Brian K. Vaughan & Fiona Staples unless expressly indicated. Image Comics® and its logos are registered trademarks and copyrights of Image Comics, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means (except for short excerpts for review purposes) without the express written permission of Brian K. Vaughan & Fiona Staples or Image Comics, Inc. All names, characters, events, and locales in this publication, except for satirical purposes, are entirely fictional, and any resemblance to actual persons (living or dead) or entities or events or places is coincidental. DIGITAL EDITION.

FOREIGN LICENSING INQUIRIES, WRITE TO: foreignlicensing@imagecomics.com

HotComic.net







In time, the draft was replaced by an all-volunteer force.



Many of those who answered this call did so out of a genuine sense of duty.



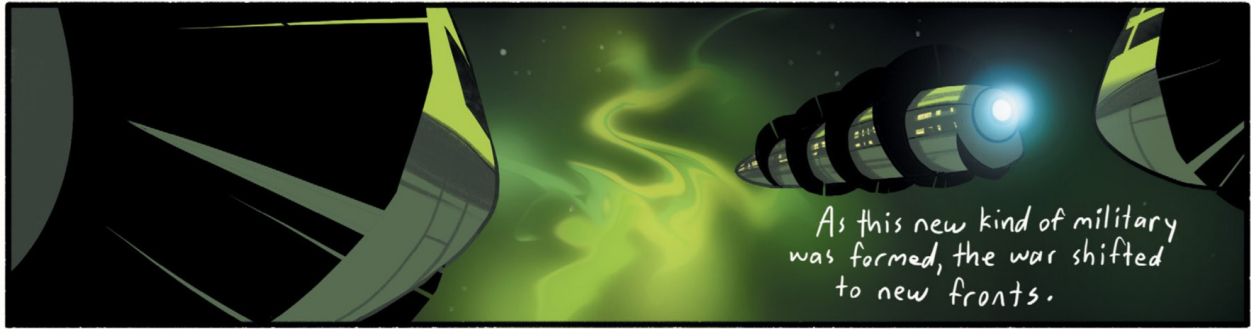
Others were merely looking for adventure.



Some were trying to escape a bad situation.



Almost all of them were poor as shit.





But as the conflict moved further into the cosmos, an unfamiliar quiet fell over the two worlds that had given birth to this bloodshed.



Civilians finally had the luxury to concern themselves with matters beyond life or death.



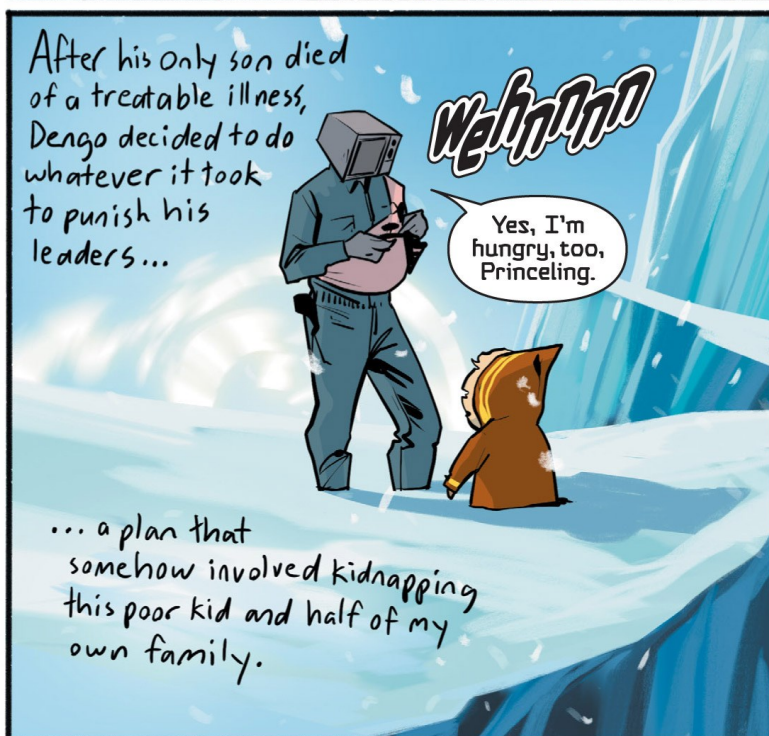
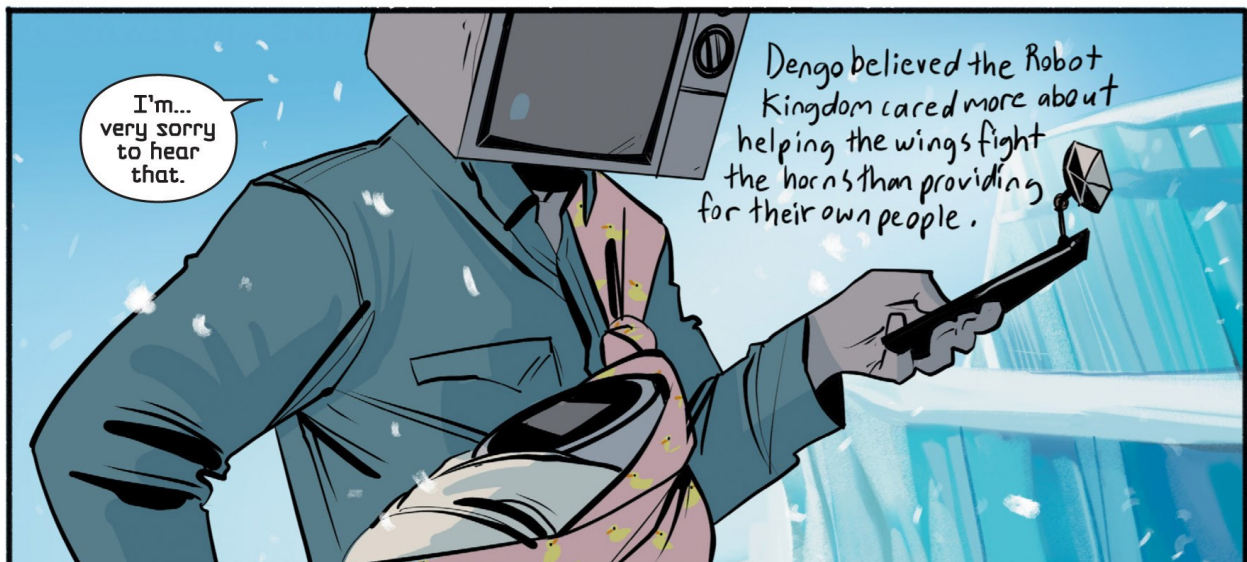
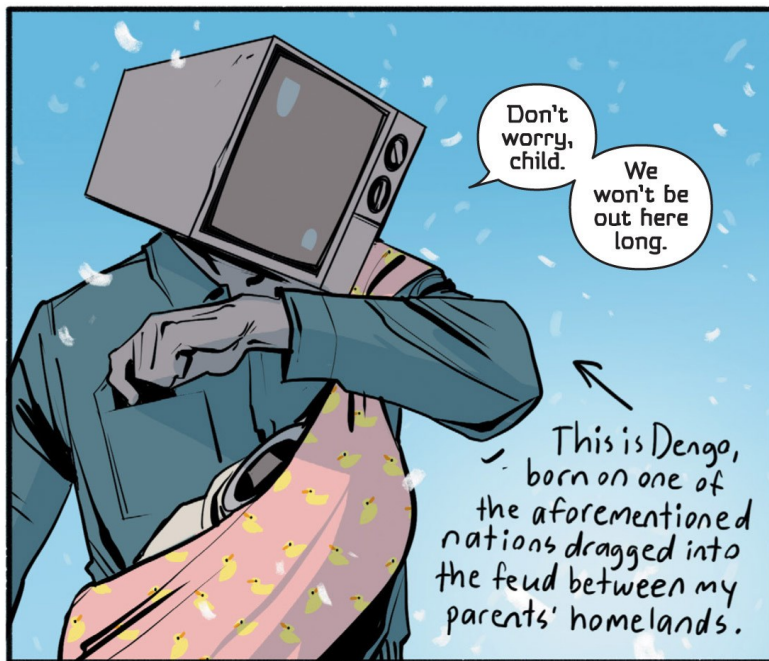
Everyone still supported the troops, of course, but in a more... abstract way than times past.



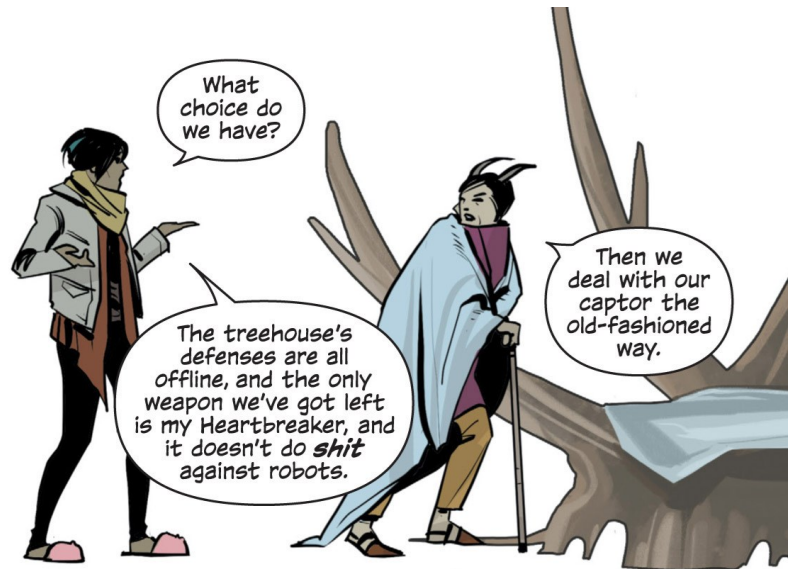
For most folks back on Landfall, war was something that would never directly impact their lives.

Lucky them.



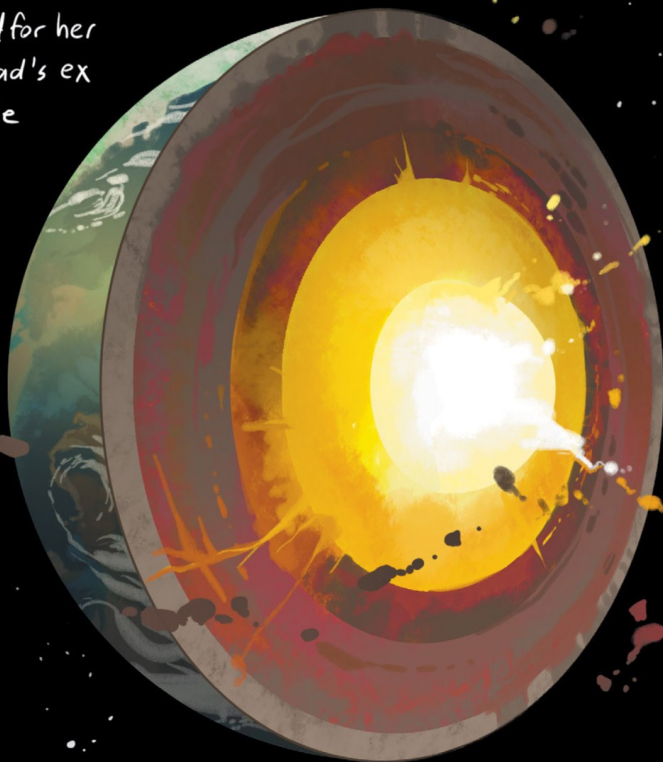






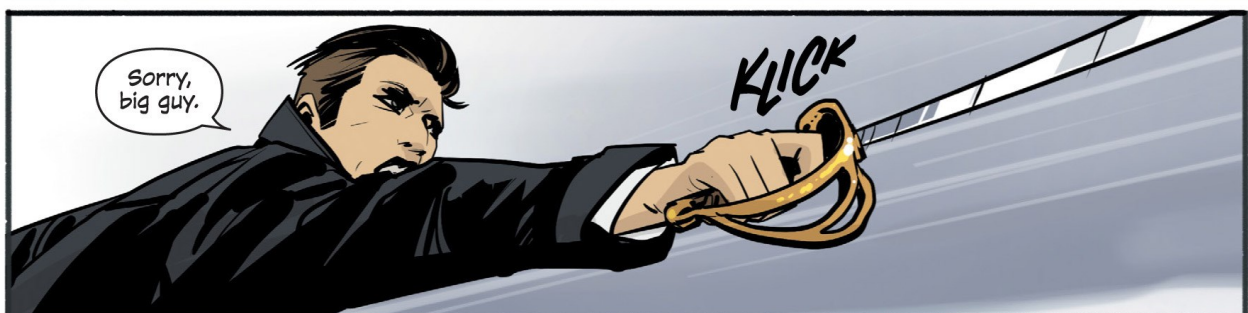
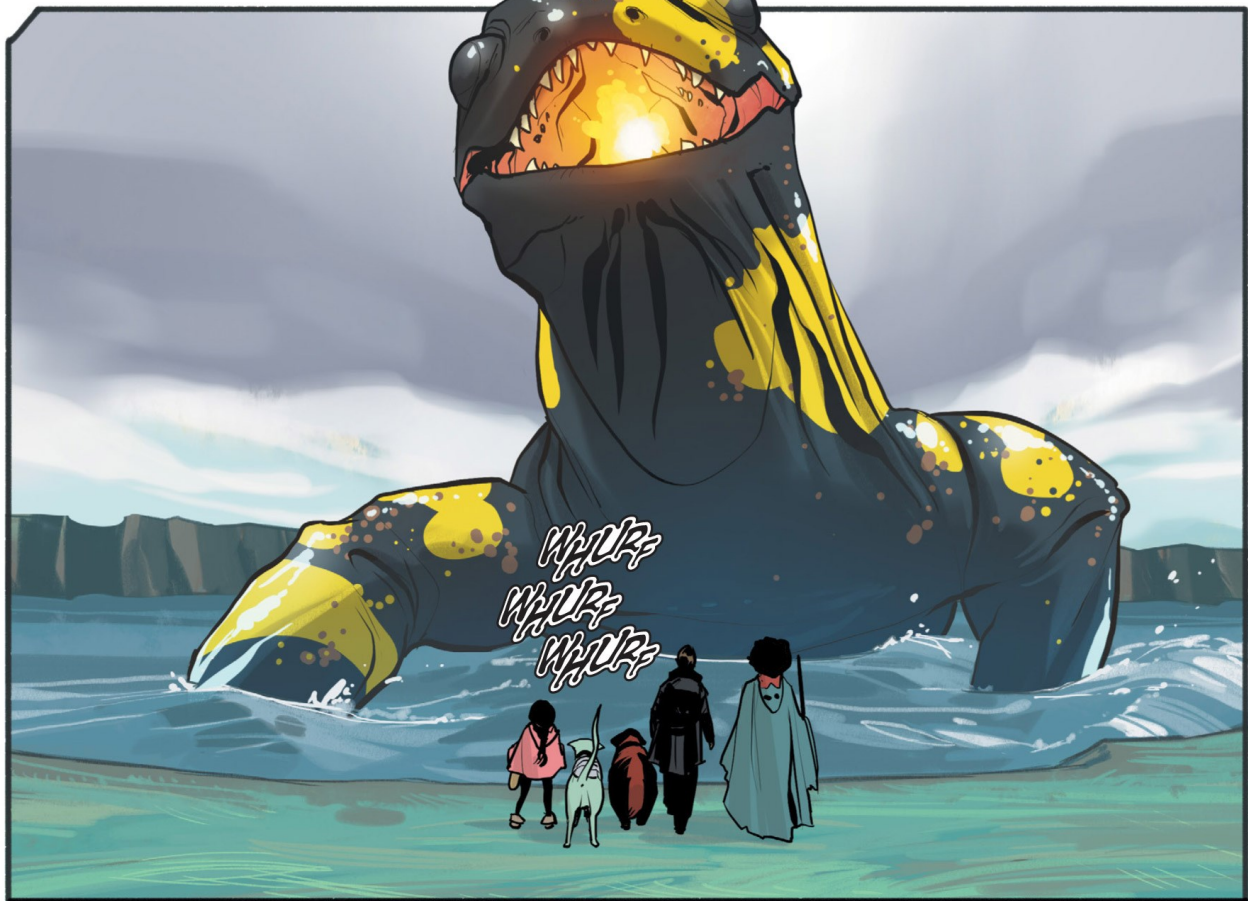


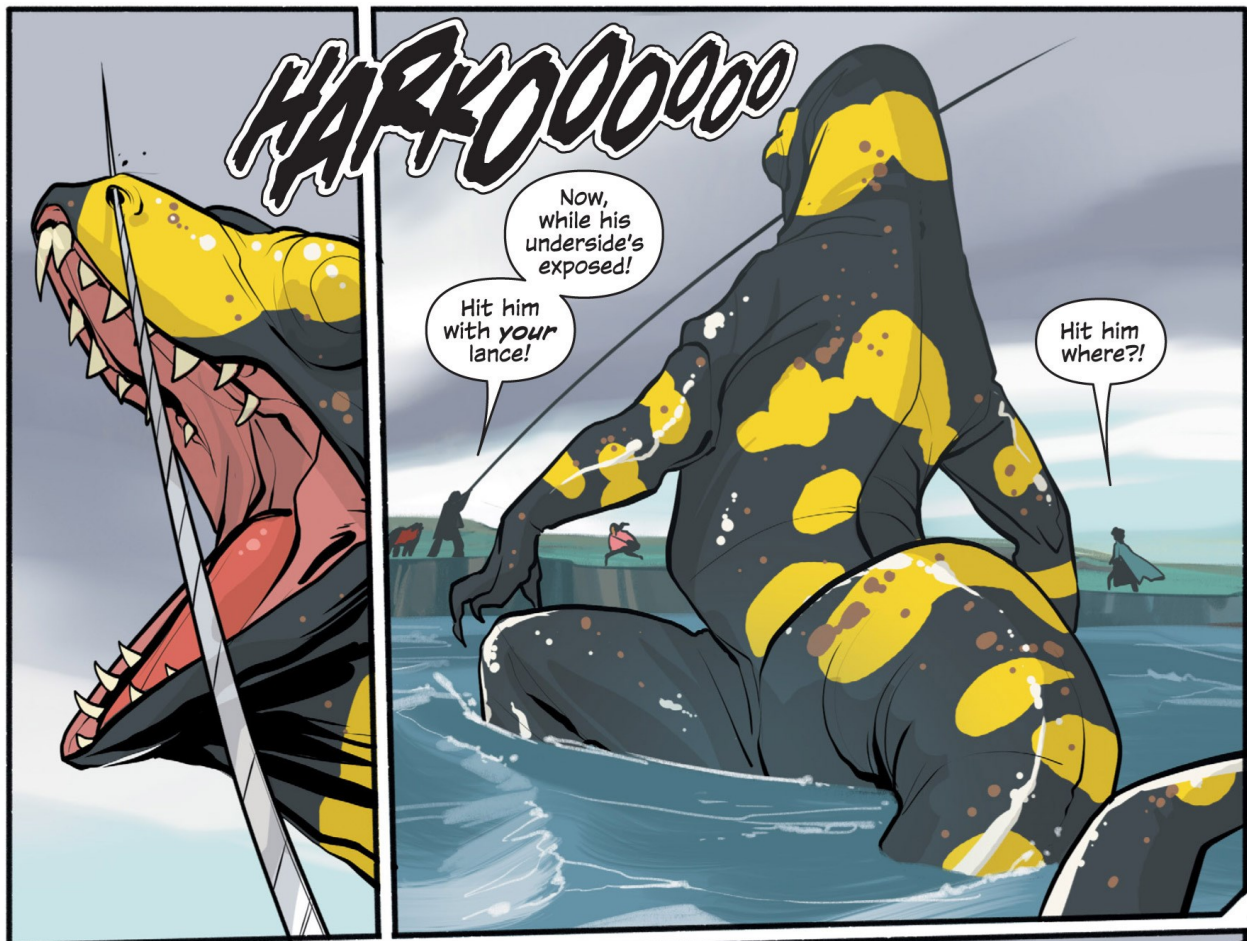
While Mom prepared for her next big role, my Dad's ex explored the remote planet of DEMIMONDE in search of a cure for a no-good contract killer named The Will.



Spoiler alert: she and her pals eventually find what they're looking for... but at a much higher cost than they'd expected.













This
can't be
right.



The only thing
left ahead of us
is a wasteland of
dying stars.

I'm just
telling you which
direction I feel ol'
Friendo tugging
me, Mister IV.

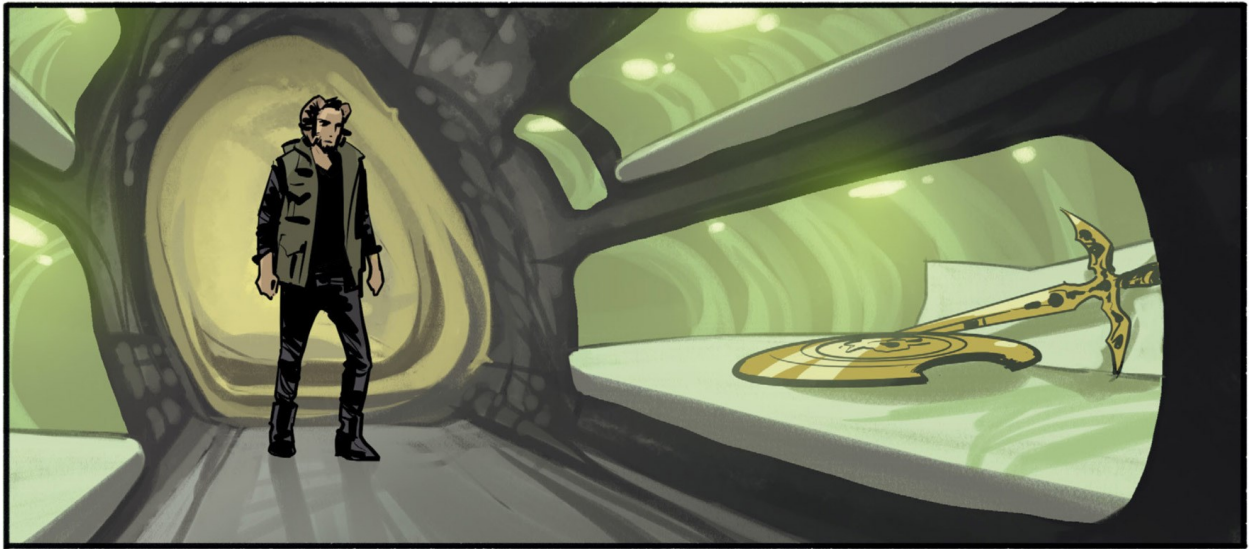
We follow
the shepherd's
lead until we have
something more
concrete.



Ghūs, kindly
remind the horned
animal back there
that he is forbidden
from addressing
me directly.









... and it would be
YEARS before the two
of us would see each
other again.



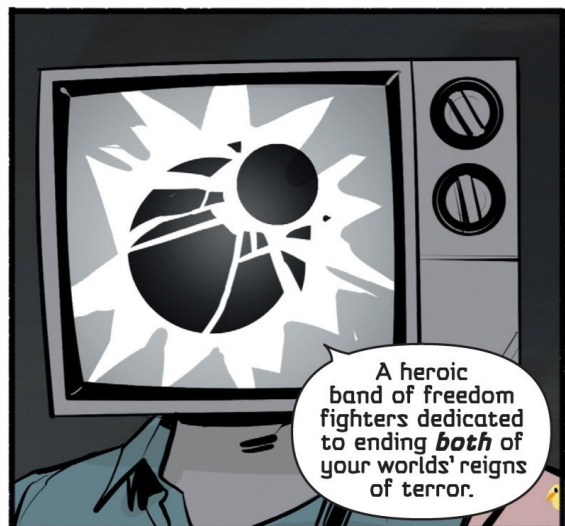
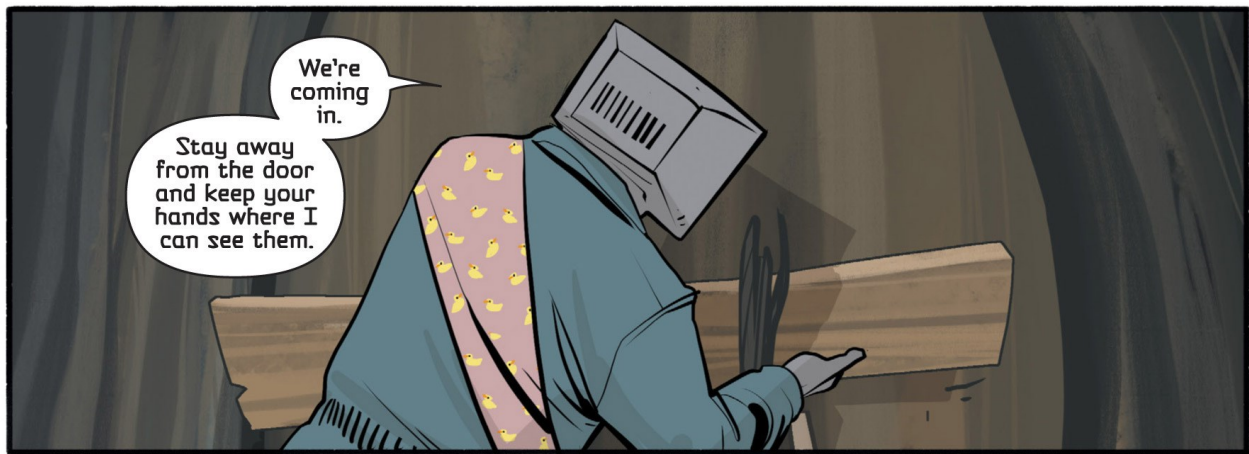
What *is*
that?

Looks like the hoof of
an old *Astronomical*.

But Landfall
decommissioned
those things
years ago.



If Dengo really
summoned the wings...
they'll slaughter Hazel
the moment they see
the nubs on her head.



A comic book illustration set in a snowy, futuristic environment. In the foreground, a green, hooded figure with a long, segmented tail holds a long spear with a purple tip. To their right, a character with orange hair, pink visor, and pink-and-black outfit stands with fists clenched. In the background, a blue-skinned character with a large blue feather and a red-skinned character with a camera-like head are visible through a circular opening. The scene is filled with falling snow and a large, bright light source in the upper right.

I called the
Revolution.

TO BE CONTINUED

4335 VAN NUYS BOULEVARD • SUITE 332 • SHERMAN OAKS • CA 91403

Welcome back, Sagacious Ones! (That's not catching on, is it?)

Brian here, the increasingly Cryptkeeper-like host of our old-school letter column, still accepting only regular ol' physical mail sent to the address above.

If you were one of the many readers who received our first deluxe hardcover as a gift over the holidays, but couldn't wait to find out what happened next and picked up the softcover collection of Volume Four, but couldn't wait to find out what happened after that, and finally picked up your first actual comic book with today's gorgeously wraparound-covered Chapter Twenty-Five... well, thank you for your impatience. We love all of our readers, but we also think that experiencing *Saga* as it unfolds monthly is the ideal way to enjoy our story, so congratulations on your excellent taste.

As I type this, illustrious co-creator Fiona Staples and I are about to head to Angoulême, France courtesy of our beloved French publisher Urban Comics. Over the past few months, Fiona and/or I have visited countless stores, festivals and conventions around the world, and I believe we've now signed a book for/shared a drink with/slept on the couch of every single human being who has ever purchased a copy of our work, except for three or four of you. But the ones we did meet couldn't have been lovelier, cooler, smarter people, so thanks again to all of you for being so nice to us.

Still, I'm about ready to go back into semi-permanent seclusion, especially because I've got lots of fun new deadlines to tackle. As announced at this January's Image Expo, in 2015, I'll be launching a mysterious new ongoing series called PAPER GIRLS co-created with my old friend Cliff Chiang, and releasing an action-packed new limited series called WE STAND ON GUARD with my new friend Steve Skroce. It's a ridiculous honor to get to make new comics with these two artistic legends, so stay tuned for a crushing amount of additional details and further plugging in the months to come.

And speaking of new work, Fiona recently made the huge announcement that she'll be drawing some issues of her all-time favorite comics property ARCHIE, totally reinventing the town of Riverdale with none other than Mark Waid, one of my absolute favorite writers, not to mention an exceptionally generous man without whom I wouldn't have a career in comics. So it would be a massive understatement to say that I'm pumped to finally find out who the fuck this Jughead character is when I read my first Archie story later this year.

But wait, I hear a million voices cry out in unison, how will these shocking new developments impact *Saga*?!?

Not at all, I'm happy to report, other than meaning fewer video games and more working weekends for Fiona and me. *Saga*'s current release schedule will continue as it has from the very beginning, with your same creative team putting out six

22-page monthly issues (followed by our standard annoying Vacationanza), with absolutely no fill-in artists or corner cutting. *Saga* is what brought us to the dance, so we promise always to remain true to you guys, even if we happen to share the occasional jitterbug with a few other wallflowers at the mixer.

Okay, enough yammering from this goon, let's get to a few of the many messages we received from you fine folks about our previous arc...

Dear Fiona and Brian,

I wanted to bring to your attention that your comic, in addition to its many deserved accolades, has also won another honor: the decay of my relationship with my mother.

*My mother's opinion on comics for a long time was, "Nope," and "I don't have time for this shit." Then, more than a year ago on a trip home from college, I plopped the Vol 1 trade of *Saga* in front of her. "Read this," I said, "you'll like it."*

It sat on her desk for a week, and then she read it in one sitting. She came back to me angry. "I love it, but thought that was all, like a novel. There's more? I don't have time for this. Where's the rest of it?"

"It's ongoing, like a TV show. I have the next few issues, but new ones only come out once a month."

"Once a month? Jesus Christ, Blair. I have shit to do."

*It's been a nightmare ever since. I am weighed down with comics every trip home. When I arrive, I am greeted with terse words: "Where is the *Saga*? Give it to me. God damn it."*

*This last summer, I walked in the house to find my mom hovering over a package. "This is comics, isn't it? Is there a *Saga* in there? Open it." I open it and hand her the issue. "God damn it, Blair. I hate you."*

Yes, that's right. You took a thriving mother-daughter relationship and destroyed it. My mother hates me, and it's all thanks to you and your ridiculously addictive book. So, you know, congratulations.

Resentfully yours,

Blair M.

New York

With quotes from,

Karelyn H.

California

Holy shit I've missed you guys.

Dear F & B,

*Per your "Everest" letter, not quite the space station, but it's 40K feet over the East China Sea in an MD-11. Love *Saga*!*

Will Smith

Pilot (not the actor)

Northridge, CA

P.S. I do know a couple astronauts, but they're retired these days.



See what I mean about having the coolest readers on the planet? For those of you new to *To Be Continued*, in the back of Chapter Nineteen, a reader sent a photo of themselves reading *Saga* at the Everest Base Camp, and I greedily asked if anyone out there could beat that elevation. So thanks for the badass photo, Will... but who's going to be the first person to bring *Saga* to space?

The challenge continues.

Dear Saga Team,

I just finished Issue 19. Good stuff! I can't agree with Brian more about how awesome Under the Skin was. I have a pretty great library and was able to get the film there. Good to see someone else agrees with the genius that is Alex & Ada!!! You don't want to get me started on my Marvel rant, but yes, Ms. Marvel is outstanding. Ah... Saga. The birth at the start of the issue was interesting! I hope the series runs for a very, very long time and someday you guys come to St. Louis for a book signing/show!

Very sincerely,

*Andrew Rootz
Chesterfield, MO*

Thanks for writing, Andrew, and for giving me an opportunity to suggest some other pop culture I enjoyed over the break. Has everyone seen Jodorowsky's *Dune* by now? It's a totally batshit documentary, and mandatory viewing for anyone who still mistakenly believes that Hollywood movies are a superior artform to comics. Speaking of which, I can't recommend highly enough Richard McGuire's *Here*, the most astounding graphic novel I've read this decade. I don't even want to risk spoiling the experience by trying to describe it, so I'll just say that if you're a fan of Chris Ware (and why wouldn't you be?), this is mandatory reading.

Dear Fiona and Brian,

I started reading comics recently and became a lover of this medium while reading your work. Thank you for your imagination and love for your characters, I hope this Saga will live long! In Bordeaux, France (yes, the city of the wine) you have a lot of fans, thanks to the comics shop Pulp's Bordeaux (not every town in France has the chance to have a comics shop), and its very nice comic seller (see my reader survey!). And almost all my friends now have had the Saga #1 gift...

Your survey is a great idea! Have a nice stay in Europe, you will be most welcome in Bordeaux! Come and visit if you want to!

*Justine Dujardin
Bordeaux, France*

Merci beaucoup, Justine. Fiona and I might just swing by one of these days. And speaking of those reader surveys, my trusty postal dachshund Hamburger K. Vaughan is currently lost somewhere in the pile of approximately seven billion submissions we received from you guys. If we can finish reading all of your fascinating answers in time, maybe we'll finally share the results next month.

Dear Brian K. Vaughan and Fiona Staples,

This is my first attempt at sending a physical letter ever, so here goes. I am probably one of the newest fans of Saga at the time I'm writing this. I just bought Volume One of the series last Wednesday with my other pulls and immediately bought Volumes 2 and 3, and issues 19-23 (omit issue 20). I just can't get enough! I should have known Image wouldn't disappoint and Saga has definitely gone up the ranks to being my favorite ongoing series.

The beautiful artwork and unpredictable storytelling in every issue of Saga can only be compared to my (now close-second) favorite comic from Image, Black Science. The unpredictability of what comes next is what I feel makes a good comic great. In particular, seeing lying Cat floating, presumably dead, in space was insane; especially after recently obtaining a puppy (a Chihuahua mix named Cosmo). I am glad I didn't have to wait a month to see what happened shortly after!

I would go on praising every single issue individually but I would like to end this with a few questions: If the Saga universe happened to occupy the same universe as any other comic, which one would it be? Also, MapQuest tells me the To Be Continued address is less than 20 minutes away from my home, school or local comic shop; would I be able to come to this address to physically hand in any future letters and save two quarters, or get an issue signed, or maybe just watch some pros working their magic creating comics?

Thanks and apologies for the word count.

*Marvin Medrano
Canoga Park, CA*

P.S.! What determines the paper quality of Image Comics' comics? I have seen that comics from Image come in a thick, matte-type paper or a thinner glossy type. This has been something I have thought about every time I purchase a comic from Image.

Nice to hear from you, Marvin, and thanks for the questions. Here are some numbered responses to your sadly unnumbered queries:

1) If Saga happened to occupy the same universe as any other comic, which one would it be? Actually, you know how at the end of *Watchmen*, Doctor Manhattan disappears to create life elsewhere in the universe? Believe it or not, that's where our story takes place! And that's fucking CANON. But please don't tell my heroes Alan Moore or Dave Gibbons that I said so.

2) Should you show up at the *To Be Continued* offices unannounced? Um, definitely not, especially because "Suite

332" is just a tiny mailbox at a postal supply store where Hamburger periodically picks up our letters. Sorry to destroy the illusion that Fiona, Fonografiks and I are all working together in a Marvel-style bullpen in Sherman Oaks. (We actually do that in our secret hideout on a small island in Turks and Caicos.)

3) And what determines the paper quality at Image Comics? The creators do! And recently, the price went up for the cool stock that Fiona and I like to use for Saga, but rather than jacking up the price of our book or switching to a cheaper kind of paper, we decided to take the financial hit ourselves and keep giving you guys the same high quality pages at our regular old price. Huge thanks to everyone at Image for actually valuing our opinion about this and letting us do exactly what we want, one of the many reasons they're the best comics publisher that's ever existed.

Dear Mr. Vaughan and Ms. Staples,

I really love this comic (duh, I'm writing snail mail to show it!), and one of the things I love best is the creativity and diversity of the characters. Some of this is Mr. Vaughan, I know, but I think a lot of it comes from Ms. Staples' imagination. I compare the comic a lot to Star Wars when I'm trying to explain it to others: "It's like Star Wars, see, except not like Star Wars. Better. It's got that space opera thing going on, except the main characters don't care about saving the universe. They're all a little bit selfish—or at least self-centered and they all have realistic objectives. Also, there's y'know, more than one named female character." I totally dig the last part. I'd lost a lot of faith in comics recently—reading Bronze Age stuff and realizing how few complex, balanced women there were—and even fewer who wore actual clothes. So when I started reading Saga, that was one of the first things that struck out to me. You guys have actually done the 50% men and 50% women thing. It feels weird to congratulate you on, you know, representing a fair world, but we see that so rarely in media that I want to. Reading Saga restored my faith in the future of comic books, and maybe in the future of media. Your commitment to social diversity keeps me warm at night when I think of all the institutionalized injustice in our world.

But there is one thing I've been wondering about Saga, actually—I haven't seen a lot of non-binary characters. Which confuses me because you guys are so on top of the whole diversity thing. I feel like I haven't seen anything but she/he pronouns used... With humans, this would be at least somewhat understandable—the majority of our population is, at least openly, cisgendered. But with alien populations I guess I expect a lot more diversity. Shouldn't there be, I don't know, a species where everyone uses the pronoun goose? That might be a little misleading for readers, but... Well, if you have the opportunity, it would be cool to see some other genders represented. I know Ms. Staples' imagination has the capacity for it. Still, you guys are doing so much and so well that I have no strong complaint. It's just something that has crossed my mind.

Saga is a book I want to read in English class. The writing, characterization, art, continuity—all of it is at the forefront of your genre. I like to imagine you two as frontiersmen, exploring strange new worlds, seeking out new life and new civilizations. Wait, that's—okay. Anyway. Maybe you two are like Star Trek—pushing the limits of your genre, challenging societal

expectations, and building a universe that audiences will love for generations. Thank you for being that bold.

Unsigned
Seattle, WA

Thanks for the amazing letter, Unsigned, and yes, I can say that we'll definitely be meeting characters in Saga who don't identify as either male or female... if we haven't met some already.

Dear Brian & Fiona,

Thank you so much for creating Saga! After I picked up #23, I stopped by my friendly local sex shop to buy a vibrator. The girl ringing me up asked what was in my Comicopolis bag and when I told her she exclaimed, "I love Saga!" We talked comics for like 5 minutes (she also reads Sex Criminals, natch). This has been my single greatest sex store experience and I must thank you.

I've always appreciated the care you take in representation of characters that aren't always seen in other sci-fi/fantasy/space opera series. I've been wondering if you've considered how genders besides male and female might fit into the worlds of Saga.

Thanks for reading and being great!
Sincerely,
Natalie
Santa Cruz, CA

This is the reason why people make comics... in the hopes that, one day, your work will help contribute to someone's "single greatest sex store experience." Much appreciated, Natalie, and see above for an answer to your thoughtful question!

To BKV & Fiona,

I've been reading comics for about 4 or 5 years now and so far haven't been angered, awed, bored or elated enough to write to one. I trust you as creators to keep me wanting more and let my consumption of your books be my praise for you rather than gushing about every plotline of splash page that makes my heart skip a beat. (Though, I guess I could do that if you want). No, for me it would take something truly special to get me to write in and that day has finally arrived.

I'm currently incarcerated at FCI Beaumont Low in Texas. Most days as an inmate are boring at best so we do what we can to escape the tedium by doing things that pass the time. Reading is big and reading comics, for me, is a joy that is difficult to describe. Whenever Peter Parker chooses to do a good deed over personal gain I'm inspired to be a better person. Whenever Captain America gives a villain a second chance I feel an opportunity opening. Whenever Marko and Alana look into each others' eyes I hope that I can find a love like that someday. I thank the creators and characters of the comics I love for helping me through this part of my life. Still, there's one man I have to thank most of all.

About five years ago I met a guy named Mike R. (who you mentioned in TBC a while back.) He's a funny and smart guy that everyone seems to want to be around, perhaps because he's "The World's Greatest Dancer?" IDK. Mike had just bought a few comics to try out and offered up some of them to read. At first I wasn't sure if I cared enough but I eventually tried out "Big Time Spider-Man" and have been hooked ever

since. Thanks to Mike, I and several others have consistently experienced the highs and lows of something like sixty titles a month! It's almost insane. Of course, Saga holds a special place in all of our hearts, which is why I'm writing this letter to you.

In a few weeks Mike is finally being released back into the world. It's always nice to see that people actually get to go home from here. So, before he leaves I wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you to Mike for all of the years of friendship and entertainment he's provided and wish him luck on all of his endeavors back in society. Sir, you are one in a million... or hundred thousand depending on the math.

Brian, it's taking about four of us to fill half the comic void that Mike is leaving, but rest assured we'll still be buying Saga for as long as you keep making it. I'm just over halfway done with my time here and look forward to getting out and being able to read a giant collected hardcover universe edition containing all of Saga. Unless it's not over, which would be way more awesome. Thanks once again to Brian, Fiona, Marko, Alana, Hazel, and Fard... always Fard. And to all of the rest of the people who make this and every comic great. I'd definitely be worse off without you.

Do

Beaumont Low Federal Correctional Institution
Beaumont, TX

Very happy to help you celebrate your pal's release, Do. And we'll be sure to send some comics your way to help fill the void Mike's leaving behind. Thanks for doing your time, and please hang in there.

Brian and Fiona,

You give random gifts to your fans, so here is a random gift from a fan! I purchased an old copy of The Illustrated Man and when I got home I found this in it.

Enjoy,
Huge fan,
Al W.
Warren, MI

Al, is... is that an old photo of two elephants fucking? If so, thank you for thinking of us?

Hello Brian & Fiona,

On a whim I decided to send you my CD because I have too many I suppose. I feel lucky to have discovered your art so just for the sake of sharing art, here's some of mine! Thank you for all you do, Saga has been a wonderful source of inspiration.

Sincerely,
Calysta Cheyenne
Eugene, OR

Thanks so much for sending us something, Calysta, especially a gift that doesn't involve animal copulation. And I really enjoyed your CD, *The Honest EP*.

I always feel bad that Team Saga isn't able to read people's unpublished fiction or sign and return any of your comics, but we're always thrilled to receive stuff like your original music (especially if you cryptically thank us in your liner notes, hint hint).

Greetings, Saga Team!

First off, great job on the series. Everything looks awesome in the book. It's one of my favorites each month.

Unfortunately, due to recent life events (my wife was just diagnosed with leukemia in August) I had to really trim back my pull list. It is probably down to less than half of what I was getting before. But Saga is one book I never even considered dropping (along with the equally great Mind MGMT and Rachel Rising). When I was looking at my list, I just couldn't imagine leaving the shop without a copy of Saga.

Anyway, I know how much you love getting invited to random gatherings, as well as receiving little gifts, so I have included a flyer inviting you to the benefit spaghetti dinner to help with the treatment costs for my wife, a Game of Thrones keychain, an Outdoor Channel deer head pin, and a random paperclip from my desk at work. Would love to see you at the dinner, but you can keep the keychain, pin, and paperclip even if you don't make it.

Thanks for always putting out a top-notch book that will remain on my pull list and the top of my reading pile every time it comes out.

Kenny
Massillon, OH

I'm so sorry to hear about your wife, Kenny! She's in our thoughts. And I apologize that I wasn't able to make the benefit spaghetti dinner, but for what little it's worth considering the circumstances, Hamburger has named YOU winner of this month's appurtenances from the Almighty Prize Drawer: an unopened Kinder Egg toy I picked up while in Europe, a used ticket to Marvel Universe Live! (my kids liked Captain Marvel best, which made me happy for Kelly Sue), and a signed copy of a super-rare and weirdly valuable Saga variant, which I thought could potentially help at least a little bit with your family's treatment costs. Please keep us in the loop.

For now, I hope the rest of you will join us next month for Chapter Twenty-six, as we learn more about our colorful Revolutionaries, and another important new character shows up to... well, you'll see. Insert Cryptkeeper-style cackling here.

Back into hiding for me,
BKV





COMING THIS FEBRUARY

THE EMPTY

JIMMIE ROBINSON

image[®]

Shadowline[®]

HotComic.net

A DEAL, SIGNED IN
BLOOD...

A LOVE, SEVERED BY
DEATH...

AN ETERNITY, WRITTEN IN
STONE...

...TO HELL WITH THAT!

NIGHTWORLD™

Midnight Sonata

COLLECTING THE FIRST FOUR ISSUES OF THE CULT-HIT COMIC BY
ADAM MCGOVERN PAOLO LEANDRI DOMINIC REGAN

FEBRUARY 2015

imagecomics.com

"A WONDERFUL KINETIC
PAEAN TO THE COMICS OF
YOUR YOUTH – FUNNY AND
RAZOR SMART. MCGOVERN
AND LEANDRI KILL IT."

– **JUNOT DÍAZ**

Pulitzer Prize-winning author of
**THE BRIEF WONDROUS LIFE
OF OSCAR WAO**

"EXACTLY WHAT I'M HUNGRY
FOR... SUPER COOL CRAZY
GNARLY COMIC BOOKS."

– **MICHAEL ALLRED**

Artist on **SILVER SURFER** and **FF**
Creator of **MADMAN**



NIGHTWORLD™ copyright ©
2015 Paolo Leandri & Adam
McGovern. Image Comics®
and its logos are registered
trademarks of Image Comics,
Inc. All rights reserved.

HotComic.net

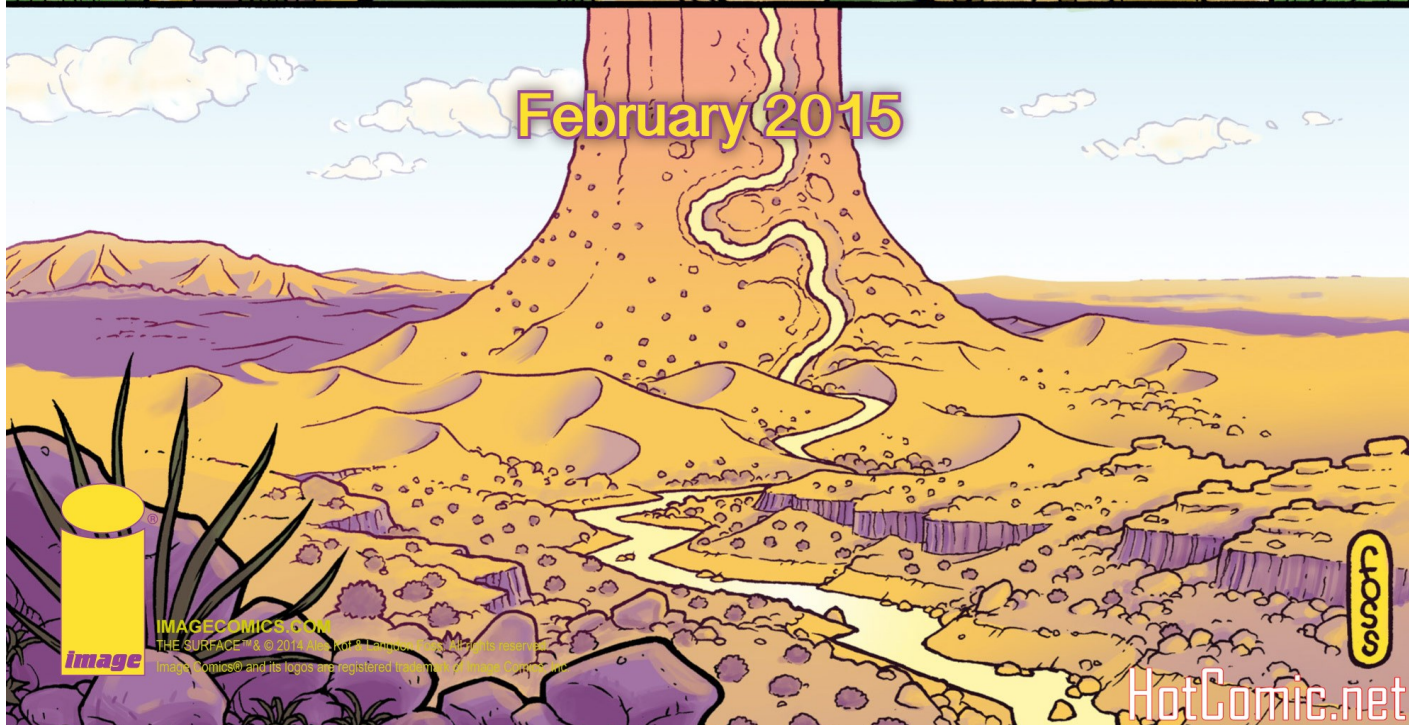
THE SURFACE

ales kot langdon foss

Three hackers. A mysterious location.
A secret key to Earth's evolution.
The great adventure begins.



February 2015



IMAGECOMICS.COM
THE SURFACE™ & © 2014 Ales Kot & Langdon Foss. All rights reserved.
Image Comics® and its logos are registered trademarks of Image Comics, Inc.



HotComic.net



imagecomics.com

RATED **M** / MATURE

HotComic.net